

# THE STATUS REPORT

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## Phenomenal Women

### *Women Veterans to be Honored!*

Over 1.6 million women veterans have bravely served the United States and they represent the fastest-growing group of veterans in the United States.

To honor the sacrifice, courage and dedication these women have shown, the Massachusetts Women Veterans' Network and the Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women will host the first annual *Women Are Veterans Too!* ceremony on November 10, 2005, from 10:30-11:30 a.m. in the State House's Nurse's Hall. The event is free and open to the public.

The "*Outstanding Woman Veteran*" award will be presented to **Alice Morrison** of Needham, MA, a former Women's Army Corps Nurse, WWII, and **Kaye Yoon** of Brockton, MA, a former Army Combat Medic in Vietnam.

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Featured speakers include Lillian Eaton, President of the Governor's Advisory Committee on Women Veterans; Captain Margaret Oglesby, of Southbridge Unit 747 of the Massachusetts Army National Guard; and Commander Joan O'Connor, retired Navy veteran.

For more information, or to RSVP, please call Heidi at the Women Veteran's Network at 617-210-5781 or Paula Daddona at the MCSW at 617-626-6520.

## First Massachusetts Conference for Women – December 7

### *Brought to You in Conjunction with The Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women*

The first annual Massachusetts Conference for Women will be held on Wednesday, December 7, 2005 at the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center.

This conference is a day-long event, which pulls together more than 75 nationally recognized experts and female leaders to address women on business, career, and financial concerns, as well as family, health and education issues.

Women have an extraordinary ability to inspire and motivate! This conference is an incredible opportunity for the women of

Massachusetts to enrich their lives, advance their careers and learn about best practices to improve themselves both personally and professionally.

Please join us at this event. Your participation will assist in making this an event that will promote and reinforce the talents and ambitions of all Massachusetts women.

For more information, or to register online, go to: [www.maconferenceforwomen.org](http://www.maconferenceforwomen.org). Or call (978) 969-1234. Register by November 7 and be eligible to win a 3-night all-inclusive spa package for two at Canyon Ranch in Lenox, MA.

## About Breast Cancer...

### *Early Detection Saves Lives!*

According to breast cancer statistics, each year 182,000 women are diagnosed with breast cancer and 43,300 die. One woman in eight either has or will develop breast cancer in her lifetime. In addition, 1,600 men will be diagnosed with breast cancer and 400 will die this year.

If detected early, the five-year survival rate exceeds 95%. Mammograms are among the best early detection methods, yet 13 million U.S. women 40 years of age or older have never had a mammogram. For more information about breast cancer and mammograms, please visit:  
<http://www.thebreastcancersite.com>.



### PASS IT ON!

Visit The Breast Cancer Site every day and click on the pink "Fund Free Mammograms" button to help fund free mammograms for homeless, low-income women. It costs you nothing to help make early detection and survival possible. Funding is paid for by site sponsors and goes to the nonprofit National Breast Cancer Foundation, which uses it to grant access to mammography to women in need. You can click once per day.

## About Cervical Cancer

### *Get the HPV Test for Peace of Mind!*

The MCSW is pleased to be a member of the state's Cervical Cancer Commission and has joined with many others to observe Cervical Cancer Awareness Month.

Cancer is a scary disease. But cervical cancer is one of the few types of cancer that can actually be prevented.

Prevention of cervical cancer is possible by finding out if you have a virus called the human papillomavirus, or HPV. Certain "high-risk" types of HPV are now known to cause most cases of cervical cancer.

In the past, doctors and other healthcare professionals have relied on the Pap test to determine who is at risk for cervical cancer. A Pap looks for abnormal cells in the cervix that are caused by HPV. If these abnormal cells are found

early, they can be treated before they turn into cancer. Thanks to the Pap, the number of women who develop cervical cancer has decreased dramatically.

However the Pap test is not foolproof, since it cannot detect HPV directly. When the Pap is done by itself, abnormal cells may be missed or may not be seen early enough to prevent cervical cancer.

If you are age 30 or over, it's recommended that you have the HPV test along with a Pap to increase the ability of your doctor or nurse to protect you against cervical cancer. For more information, please visit:  
<http://www.thehpvtest.com>.

*"The most important fact about Breast & Cervical Cancer... Early detection saves lives!"*

*Be proactive about your health!*



## Domestic Violence

### *October is also Domestic Violence Awareness Month*

Women throughout the world continue to be the victims of violence, sexual exploitation and discrimination.

One in three women will experience violence in her lifetime – most often at the hands of someone she knows.

To continue to highlight the problem and urge solutions, many activities were planned statewide to observe National Domestic Violence Awareness Month. The MCSW, which has two seats on the Governor's Commission on Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence, participated in a press conference held to recognize the many Massachusetts advocates who work tirelessly on behalf of victims of domestic violence. We also were part of a resource fair to assist the general public and state house employees in learning more about domestic violence and sexual assault advocacy and direct service organizations.



L. to R.  
The Honorable Kerry Healey,  
Lt. Governor of MA, and  
Paula Daddona, MCSW  
Program Manager /Oct. 18

The MCSW distributed its Sexual Assault & Domestic Violence Resource brochure, which lists various resources for victims of Sexual & Domestic Violence. To obtain a copy of the brochure, contact our office by calling 617-626-6520, or send an e-mail to [mcsw@state.ma.us](mailto:mcsw@state.ma.us). The resource brochure is also available for download on our Web site: [www.mass.gov/women/resources](http://www.mass.gov/women/resources).

If you would like to add your organization to our resource listing, please e-mail your information to [mcsw@state.ma.us](mailto:mcsw@state.ma.us).

## Executive Director Corner

This year is an incredibly exciting one at the MCSW. As you will see from this newsletter, the MCSW is moving forward on many fronts. This is due in large part to the tremendous support of our Appointing Authorities and the state legislature who restored the MCSW FY 2006 budget to its original \$195,000 level.

These additional funds have allowed us to hire a part-time Outreach Coordinator, Jill Ashton, who is taking on responsibility for many key external initiatives. In addition, a fabulous crop of enthusiastic and talented unpaid interns has joined our small staff of Paula Daddona, Program Manager and Darlene Kelter, part-time Administrative Assistant. The interns are truly allowing us to expand the organization's capacity in very meaningful ways. My thanks to all of the above for their very hard work and commitment to improving the status of women in Massachusetts.

Our volunteer Commissioners, who represent the geographic and ethnic diversity of the state we serve, are engaged and working diligently and enthusiastically, making a difference for women, each in her own way.

We believe that it is the collective power of women's voices that will truly create change, here in Massachusetts, in the nation and in the world. We strive, in all we do, to make connections and create coalitions and collaborations that will allow us to further our shared missions and goals. We envision a future where ALL women will realize, appreciate and utilize their individual gifts to become change agents for women and the issues we care about.

Join us in improving the status of women in Massachusetts!

*Linda Brantley*

## MCSW Legislative Updates

The Commission works closely with its Appointing Authorities and state legislators, particularly the Massachusetts Women's Legislative Caucus, to promote and pass legislation that positively impacts women and families of the Commonwealth. The Commission's legislative activity is coordinated through its Legislative Committee, which examines and recommends legislation to the full Commission for endorsement. When deciding whether to endorse a piece of legislation, the Legislative Committee carefully examines both sides of a bill.

### **MCSW's Legislative Endorsements for the 2005 – 2006 Session are as follows:**

#### **S2193 An Act Relative to Responsible Welfare Reform**

The bill revises Chapter 5, the state's welfare law, to avoid fiscal penalties and preserve subsistence benefits for vulnerable families with children. The bill also directs DTA to provide necessary services and work supports to TAFDC recipients with disabilities and other substantial barriers to employment. Family well-being and fiscal responsibility are the goals of this bill.

#### **S1130 An Act to Establish Paid Sick Days**

This bill would provide every employee in the Commonwealth with seven paid sick days per year to be used for the employee or her/his children, parents, spouse or parent of a spouse. A pro-rata amount could be used for part-time employees who work 30 hours/week or less.

#### **H3782 An Act Indexing the Minimum Wage**

This bill would raise the minimum wage to \$7 in 2006 and to \$8.25 in 2007. The minimum wage would then be adjusted annually to reflect the rate of inflation.

#### **H706 An Act to Establish a Special Commission to Investigate the Integration of International Human Rights Standards into Massachusetts State Law and Policies**

This bill will establish a commission to investigate and study the Commonwealth's laws and policies relative to the Integrated International Human Rights Standard.

#### **S2073 An Act to Provide Timely Access to Emergency Contraception**

This bill will require hospital emergency rooms to make emergency contraception available to rape survivors and will also allow pharmacists to dispense emergency contraception through a collaborative agreement with a physician.

#### **H3664/S1133 An Act to Establish a Self-Sufficiency Standard in Massachusetts**

This bill will establish a realistic, independent benchmark of economic status by region throughout Massachusetts. The Self-Sufficiency Standard will calculate the realistic costs of housing, food, child care, transportation, medical care, taxes and miscellaneous costs by region within the state. The standard will be used as an official and accurate reference point for policymakers.

*If you would like to help support any of the above legislation, please contact:*

*Jill Ashton, MCSW Outreach Coordinator*

*E-mail: [mcsw@state.ma.us](mailto:mcsw@state.ma.us) / Phone: 617-626-6520*

## MCSW to Establish Statewide Advisory Council Network

One of charges of the Commission is the responsibility of advising executive and legislative bodies and the media on the status of women in Massachusetts.

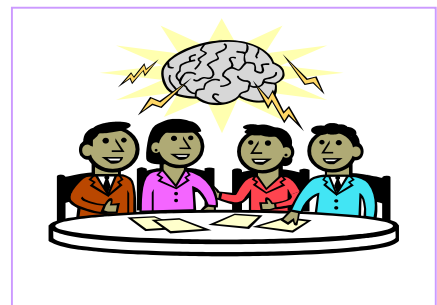
To further present efforts, the MCSW will establish eight advisory councils throughout the Commonwealth. These Councils will function as intermediaries between the Commission and their local communities, advising the MCSW about region specific issues and recommending action to improve the status of women.

The Councils will also help the Commission to identify women who might be interested in serving on the Commission or assisting in its work, who wish to become involved in the political

process or who might serve as models for others in the state.

We are currently in search of women leaders who may be interested in representing the specific concerns of women in their local communities.

If you are, or know someone who may be, interested in serving on an Advisory Council please call Jill Ashton at 617-626-6525 or send an e-mail to [Jill.Ashton@state.ma.us](mailto:Jill.Ashton@state.ma.us).



## MCSW Convenes Meeting of MA Women's Commissions

On Thursday, October 20<sup>th</sup>, the MCSW held the first meeting of the Massachusetts Women's Commissions. The Worcester City Manager's Committee on the Status of Women hosted the event.

In attendance were representatives from seven of eleven Commissions, including Berkshire County, Boston, Cambridge, Massachusetts, Newton, Somerville, and Worcester. The dinner meeting allowed for peers to meet peers and discussion of individual commission programs, successes and challenges. It was also an opportunity to connect with women from across the state for the purpose of supporting and collaborating on initiatives that advance the status of women.

MCSW is pleased with the great success of this first meeting and plans to convene the Commissions on a bi-annual basis.

***"How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world."***

***-Anne Frank***



## 2005 Summer Highlights

### Women's Equality Day

On August 26, 2005 the Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women hosted a celebration to honor the 85th anniversary of women's right to vote. The event was held at the Boston Women's Memorial. Congress created Women's Equality Day in 1971 to commemorate women gaining the right to vote. In 1920 the 19<sup>th</sup> amendment was signed declaring, "The right of the citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex."

The event speakers featured JudyAnn Bigby, M.D. of Brigham and Women's Hospital; Stacy Madison, Co-owner of Stacy's Pita Chip Company Inc.; Kathleen O'Toole, Commissioner of the Boston Police Department; and Susana Segat, MCSW Commissioner and President of SEIU Local 888.

Barbara Lee, president of the Barbara Lee Family Foundation served as Emcee to the crowd of over 40.



L. to R. JudyAnn Bigby, MD, Brigham and Women's Hospital; Kathleen Casavant, MCSW Chair & Treasurer of the Massachusetts AFL-CIO; Kathleen O'Toole, Boston Police Commissioner; and Linda Brantley, MCSW Executive Director /Aug. 26

### Bringing Women to the Table

The popular *Bringing Women to the Table* dinner series continued on September 21, featuring Evelyn Murphy, the first female Lt. Governor of Massachusetts and author of *"Getting Even: Why Women Don't Get Paid Like Men-and What to Do About It,"* as the keynote speaker. Leading Massachusetts' women met at the College Club in Boston for this fourth invitation-only event, which is co-sponsored by the Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women and the Massachusetts Caucus of Women Legislators.

Murphy is the founder and president of the WAGE (Women Are Getting Even) project, which encourages women to challenge business for unfair pay to women workers. The 75 event attendees were treated to a passionate discussion on the prevalence of sex discrimination in hiring and compensation. All were eager to learn of Murphy's plan, outlined in the book, to eliminate gender pay disparity within 10 years! The Commission is eager to work with Murphy and others to ensure that this happens for the women of Massachusetts.

## Behind the Scenes at MCSW

### *The Speakers Bureau*

The MCSW Speakers Bureau lends the services of our Commissioners and staff to speak about various issues that impact Massachusetts' women.

Through this service, the Commission hopes to support the women of Massachusetts, raise awareness of women's issues, educate women about the resources of the Commission, and strive for positive changes for women in the Commonwealth.

#### **How to Request a Speaker:**

You may submit an electronic request via our Web site at [www.mass.gov/women](http://www.mass.gov/women). Click on the "Speakers Bureau" link. You may also e-mail your request to [mcsw@state.ma.us](mailto:mcsw@state.ma.us).

Please include the date, time and location of your event, the number of people expected, and the topic or issue you would like to have discussed.

Speakers are free of charge. However, tax-deductible donations to the MCSW are always welcomed to help subsidize MCSW's operating and special project expenses. Checks should be made payable to "The MCSW." Thank you for your support.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

-Margaret Mead

### *The MCSW's Women's Research Collaborative*

The Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women is hosting its first meeting of The Women's Research Collaborative. Participants from major women's research institutions within Massachusetts will come together on December 1, to discuss the gap between research on women's topics and corresponding results.

Discussions will include how to better disseminate both currently available and future research results. More importantly, we hope to open the lines of communication among women advocates and woman researchers.

### *MCSW Breaking News:*

*On October 26, MCSW Commissioners voted to endorse  
**H.1641 An Act to Provide Health Education in Schools**  
More information to follow in next month's Status Report.*

## Upcoming Noteworthy Events & Happenings

⇒ November 10, 2005:

Women are Veterans Too! State House, Nurses Hall / 10:30 – 11:30 am

⇒ December 7, 2005

Massachusetts Conference for Women

⇒ March 1, 2006

MCSW Unsung Heroine Awards Presentation

⇒ March 22, 2006

3<sup>rd</sup> Annual MCSW Unsung Heroine Awards Luncheon

Please mark your calendar & watch our future newsletters for more information



If you have an event that you would like added to our future newsletters, or Web site, please e-mail the information to: [Paula.Daddona@state.ma.us](mailto:Paula.Daddona@state.ma.us)

*Friendly Reminder:  
Don't forget to register for the*

**THE MASSACHUSETTS CONFERENCE FOR WOMEN**

*brought to you in conjunction with*

**The Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women**

**You don't want to miss this conference! Register early!**

For more information, or to register online go to [www.maconferenceforwomen.org](http://www.maconferenceforwomen.org)



## Commission Officers & Members FY 2006

### **Kathleen Casavant, Chair, Chelsea**

Martha Chadwick, Boston

Gloria Coney, Roxbury

Lianne Cook, Salem

Helen Corbett, Danvers

Donna Finneran, Mattapan

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### **Catherine Greene, Esq., Secretary, Brighton**

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Mary Reardon Johnson, East Longmeadow

Judith Kurland, Brookline

Roseanna Means, MD, Wellesley

Angela Menino, Hyde Park

Carol Pimentel, New Bedford

Susana Segat, Cambridge

### **Greer Tan Swiston, Treasurer, Newton**

Kateri Walsh, Springfield

## Commission Staff & Interns

Linda Brantley, Executive Director

Paula Daddona, Program Manager

Jill Ashton, Outreach Coordinator

Darlene Kelter, Administrative Assistant

Johanna Bernstein, Intern

Stacie Hargis, Intern

Evan Kuhlman, Intern

**WE'RE ON THE WEB!**

**VISIT US AT:**

**[WWW.MASS.GOV/WOMEN](http://WWW.MASS.GOV/WOMEN)**

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